

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A ceramic filter comprising:

honeycomb segments bonded together, being partitioned by porous walls, and having vents for exhaust gas to flow therethrough from an inlet to an outlet in a longitudinal direction,

_____wherein

_____each of the honeycomb segments includes first vents and second vents alternately placed,

~~wherein~~ the first vents are filled at the inlet and are open at the outlet,

~~wherein~~ the second vents are open at the inlet and are filled at the outlet,

~~wherein~~ each of the honeycomb segments has at the inlet an end surface having a central portion and a peripheral portion enclosing the central portion,

~~wherein~~ the second vents in the central portion are additionally filled at the inlet,

~~wherein~~ the central portion is larger in vent-filling percentage than the peripheral portion at the inlet,

~~wherein~~ the central portion has an additional filling percentage set within a range of 0.1 to 10 % 3% to a total area of an end surface of each honeycomb segment at the inlet, and

~~wherein the central portion has an additional filling percentage set~~ percentage is set on the condition that ~~increase~~ increased percentage of pressure loss of the entire filter, ~~increasing with an~~ due to increased amount of additional filling, is a predetermined value ~~or less~~ or less, and that ~~decrease~~ decreased percentage of the maximum temperature during burning of soot accumulated in the filter is a predetermined value or more.

- 2-4. (Canceled)

5. (New) A ceramic filter, comprising:

a plurality of honeycomb segments, each honeycomb segment extending in a longitudinal direction between first and second end faces that are substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal direction, each honeycomb segment defining a plurality of substantially parallel vents, extending in the longitudinal direction between the first and second end faces, and forming a matrix of the substantially parallel vents that are disposed in a central portion and in a peripheral portion, the honeycomb segments being disposed relative to each other such that the first end faces are substantially flush, the second end faces are substantially flush, the vents are substantially parallel with each other, and the vents of each honeycomb segment including alternating first and second vents; and

a plurality of plugs disposed in at least the first end faces of the first vents and at least the second end faces of the second vents, the plurality of plugs also being additionally disposed in some of the first and second end faces of both the first and second vents of certain portions of the each honeycomb segment, an amount of the additional plugged vents in the central portion of one of the first and second end faces being 0.1 to 3% larger than that in the peripheral portion of the one of the first and second end faces.